

## Chapter 10. Parks and Open Space

### Introduction

Parks and Open Space are a key asset to the community and contribute to the quality of life residents experience. The parks and open space system is the result of proactive planning by the City, County and Metropolitan Council. The system provides residents a variety of active and passive recreational opportunities, which are enhanced through the City's recreational programming services.

This section also draws upon several additional studies on specific aspects of parks, open space and recreation programming.

- The *Open Space and Park Land Study*, prepared by the Parks and Recreation Commission in 1996, reviewed the inventory of existing open space and vacant undeveloped properties in the City and made recommendations for potential land acquisitions. Some of these acquisitions have taken place; others have been foreclosed by subsequent development, and others remain as future options.
- The *Shoreview Parks Needs Assessment and Improvement Recommendations* prepared for Parks and Recreation Commission in 2005, reviewed the existing park system, changing community needs and provides recommendations for each park, along with park revitalization plans.
- The *Athletic Facility Needs Evaluation*, prepared for the Mounds View School District Area in 2002, addressed the issue of whether athletic facilities within the school district were adequate to meet current and future community and school needs. The study recommended the addition or improvement of various facilities to correct existing shortfalls.
- The *System Plan* for the Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department, approved in 2006, provides information on site characteristics and development plans for all Ramsey County open space lands and other facilities.

This chapter of the *Comprehensive Plan*:

- Examines the **existing parks and open space** within the City.
- Provides an **analysis of** how well these resources will meet City residents' **current and future needs**.
- Establishes **goals, policies, and recommended actions** for future expansions and improvements to City parks and trails.

## Existing Parks and Open Space System

Shoreview's park and open space system consists of a broad range of facilities including City parks, Ramsey County parks and open space, other county-owned facilities, and school recreational facilities. A total of about 1,400 acres, or almost 18 percent of the City's land area, consists of parkland and publicly owned open space. See **Map 10-1** for park and open space locations.

The City has a long history of partnership with Ramsey County and the school districts to improve and manage county and school facilities for shared public use. These facilities should be considered as components of a single open space and recreational system serving City residents and the general public. These recreation facilities are further described in **Table 10-1**. Parks and open space in the City are classified in accordance with their ownership and function. **Table 10-2** summarizes the classifications for City- and County-owned parks and open space.

### City Parks and Facilities

#### Neighborhood Parks and Mini-Parks

Neighborhood parks, the basic unit of the park system, are generally designed to serve a residential area within approximately a half-mile radius, sometimes in conjunction with an elementary school. Almost all neighborhood parks have off-street trails that provide connections to the surrounding neighborhoods. Most of Shoreview's city parks are classified as neighborhood parks. Neighborhood parks include Bobby Theisen Park, Bucher Park, Lake Judy Park, Shamrock Park, Sitzer Park, Rice Creek Fields and Wilson Park. These parks typically include the same group of facilities: two ballfields, a hockey rink, a soccer field, tennis courts, a volleyball court, play equipment, off-street trails, and a shelter building. Neighborhood parks range from 5 to 25 acres in size.

Mini-parks, also known as play lots, are smaller parks, typically  $\frac{1}{4}$  to 2 acres in size, designed to serve a concentrated or limited population. Ponds Park, one acre in size, is a mini-park that serves the nearby Ponds Park neighborhood. Facilities consist of a playground and picnic area.

#### Community Parks

Community parks are designed to provide a combination of passive and active recreational activities for the entire community. These parks are typically 25 or more acres in size. They include areas suited for intense recreational facilities, such as athletic fields and courts, as well as natural areas for outdoor recreation such as walking, biking and picnicking. Community parks are generally located along collector or arterial streets for easy access from all or a part of the community. The community parks also have off-street trails connecting to surrounding areas. Each of the City's community parks includes neighborhood park elements such as playground areas, tennis courts, local trails, hard surface areas, free skate and hockey rinks.

<b>Shoreview Recreation Areas</b>  Web Page: <a href="http://www.ci.shoreview.mn.us">www.ci.shoreview.mn.us</a>		Acres	Ballfields	Boat Ramp	X-Country Skiing	Fishing	Football/Soccer	Hardcourt Area	Hiking Trails	Hockey Rinks	Golf Course	Paths	Picnic Areas	Playground Eq.	Shelter	Skating, general	Skating, Speed	Soccer	Swimming	Tennis Courts	Volleyball
<b>Bobby Theisen Park</b> Cty Rd E & Vivian East & West of Island Lake School		15					■	■		■		■			■	■		1		3	
<b>Bucher Park</b> 5900 Mackubin North on 49, right on Elaine		25	2				■	■		■		■	■	■	■	■		1		2	
<b>Chippewa Middle School</b> 5000 Hodgson Rd			3				■	■						■				2	■	5	
<b>Emmet Williams Elem. School</b> 955 Cty Rd D—Between Lex. & Cty Rd D			2											■							
<b>Island Lake Elem. School</b> 3555 N. Victoria—Victoria & Cty Rd E			2					■						■							
<b>Lake Judy Park</b> 900 Tillerun — Arboast & Richmond		5										■	■	■	■						
<b>McCullough Park</b> 915 County Rd I North on Lexington, right on Cty Rd I		75	2				■	■		■		■	■	■	■	■		1		2	
<b>Ponds Park</b> 190 Sherwood Road Sherwood and Pond Drive		1										■	■	■							
<b>Rice Creek Fields</b> 5880 Rice Creek Parkway		10	4									■	■	■	■						
<b>Shamrock Park</b> County Road I & Snelling N. on Lexington to Cty Rd I, W. 2 miles		23	2				■	■		■		■	■	■	■	■		1		2	
<b>Shoreview Commons and Community Center</b> 4650 North Victoria		40	2				■	■		■		■	■	■	■	■	■	1	■	2	■
<b>Sitzer Park</b> Hodgson and Snail Lake Rds 3 blocks S. of 96 at Hodgson & Snail Lake		8	2					■		■		■	■	■	■	■				2	
<b>Snail Lake Elementary School</b> Highways 49 and 96			2					■						■							
<b>Turtle Lake Elementary School</b> Country Road I & Lexington			2				■	■						■							
<b>Wilson Park</b> 815 County Road F 1 block W. of Victoria, North of 694		13	2					■		■		■		■	■	■				2	
The following are recreation areas operated by Ramsey County Parks and Recreation and located within the City of Shoreview. For more information on these parks, please call 651-748-2500 • Web: <a href="http://www.co.Ramsey.mn.us">www.co.Ramsey.mn.us</a>																					
<b>Island Lake County Park</b> 3611 Victoria Street		167		■		■					■		■		■						
<b>Lake Owasso County Park</b> 370 N. Owasso Blvd.		9		■		■							■						■		
<b>Shoreview Ice Arena</b> 877 Highway 96 (Hockey only)										■											
<b>Snail Lake Regional Park</b> 580 Snail Lake Blvd.		400		■	■	■			■			■	■						■		
<b>Turtle Lake County Park</b> 4979 Hodgson Road		9		■		■							■						■		

Table 10-1 – Recreational Facilities

Table 10-2. Park Classifications

	Neighborhood Park	Mini- park	Community Park	Regional Park	Regional Trail	County Park	County Open Space	Special Use
<b>City Parks</b>								
Bobby Theisen Park	•							
Bucher Park	•							
Community Center and Shoreview Commons			•					
Lake Judy Park	•							
McCullough Park			•					
Ponds Park		•						
Rice Creek Fields	•							
Shamrock Park	•							
Sitzer Park	•							
Wilson Park	•							
<b>Regional and County</b>								
Turtle Creek - County Ditch 8							•	•
Highway 96 Regional Trail					•			
Island Lake Golf and Training Center								•
Island Lake Park						•		
Lake Owasso Park						•		
Lexington Parkway Regional Trail					•			
Poplar Lake Park						•		
Ramsey County Ice Arena								•
Rice Creek North Regional Trail					•			
Grass-Vadnais-Snail Lake Regional Park				•				
Turtle Lake Park						•		

McCullough Park, 75 acres in size, serves the northern section of the City with athletic fields, tennis and hard court areas, ice rink, and other recreational facilities, as well as off-street trails and natural areas.

### **Shoreview Commons/Community Center**

The campus of Shoreview Commons is located in the heart of the City at Victoria Street and County Highway 96 and includes the Shoreview Community Center, City Hall, Ramsey County Library, and Ramsey County's Shoreview Ice Arena. All of these community facilities are surrounded by abundant views of open spaces, lakes, wetlands, and are well served by an extensive trail system.

Commons Park was acquired by the city in the mid-1970s as part of the City's progressive development of a comprehensive park system to serve the community. Shoreview Commons was established to serve as the central park area of the city. Since the original purchase, a 40-acre multi-purpose recreation area has been developed in the park.

In 1990, the Shoreview Community Center opened as one of the first facilities of its kind, and has become the community-gathering place for cultural, recreational, and social activities for Shoreview and the surrounding area. The Shoreview Community Center includes the Tropics Indoor Water Park, indoor track, fitness rooms, gymnasium, meeting rooms, and banquet facility. This space was eventually "outgrown" and in 2003 the Community Center was expanded. This expansion was driven by an aging population and a community interest to increase health and wellness through stronger fitness programs and facilities. The Center now provides approximately 90,000 square feet of space, a multipurpose gymnasium and running track, and has been improved by enhancing waterpark/swimming facilities, meeting facilities, kitchen/catering facilities and most importantly creating a new state of the art fitness center. The fitness area offers cardio-vascular and weight training equipment, plus group workout spaces. The expansion also included an outdoor pavilion that is used for group picnics, the City's Summer Concert series, community events and as a warming house in the winter.

Community groups, civic organizations, schools and churches all regularly use the Community Center for meetings and events that bring citizens together and strengthen the community.

In 1996, the City Council authorized a comprehensive study of the Highway 96 corridor to establish a framework plan to guide the future development, redevelopment, and enhancement of the city's core area, which includes Shoreview Commons. The *Core Area Framework Plan* recommended further study of expanded recreational, cultural, and social facilities to strengthen the Shoreview Commons area as an active place for the community to gather. Based on this recommendation, the City initiated an update of the master plan for the Shoreview Commons civic campus to coordinate and expand facilities that are consistent with the community's goals and compatible with surrounding uses. The plan calls for a variety of improvements to the Shoreview Commons, including a new playground area, an outdoor swimming area adjacent to the pool, a decorative outdoor pond area that could also be used for ice skating in the winter, an enhanced entryway and sculpture garden area.

## Local Trails

The local trail system serves the community by connecting neighborhoods with local destinations. This system consists of off-street trails, walkways, and neighborhood trails, and is discussed in depth in Chapter 5 - Transportation.

- **Off-Street Trails.** Off-street trails within parks or open space include trails within all of our City parks as well as the regional and county parks.
- **Walkways.** Walkways or sidewalks along major streets provide the primary routes that link pedestrians to parks, schools, community facilities and transit routes. Primary north-south routes include walkways along Lexington Avenue, Royal Oaks Drive, Snail Lake Boulevard, and Victoria Street north of Owasso Boulevard N, and Hodgson Road, north of Highway 96. Primary east-west routes include walkways along County Roads F, I and J, Tanglewood Avenue, Highway 96, Gramsie Road and Owasso Boulevard North.
- **Neighborhood Trails.** There are short paths found throughout the City that link neighborhoods with each other and provide street connections.

## Regional Parks and Open Space

Much of the open space and parkland in Shoreview is owned and managed by Ramsey County. Ramsey County is one of ten implementing agencies for the regional park system in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. Implementing agencies own and operate the parks and trails; the Metropolitan Council, with recommendations from the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission, approves master plans, develops policies, prepares the capital improvement program and provides funding to finance improvements. Regional recreational facilities are classified as regional parks, park reserves, special recreation features and regional trails.

The Metropolitan Council estimated the use of these regional facilities in their study, *Annual Use Estimate of the Metropolitan Regional Park System for 2006*. The overall use of these facilities declined slightly from 2005 to 2006, however, estimated annual visits have increased 39% since 1995. In 2006, the majority of visits (78%) were to the regional parks, park reserves and special recreational features while trail usage accounted for 22%. Walking is the highest rated activity in the regional park system followed by biking, swimming and picnicking.

## Regional Parks

Regional parks are defined by the Metropolitan Council as areas “of natural or ornamental quality for nature-oriented outdoor recreation such as picnicking, boating, fishing, swimming, skiing, hiking and camping.” Regional parks are components of the Regional Recreation Open Space System; their official designation requires approval by the Metropolitan Council. A portion of Vadnais-Snail Lake Regional Park is located in Shoreview.

### **Vadnais-Snail Lake Regional Park.**

This Regional Park, 746 acres in size, connects Snail Lake and Grass Lake and includes the St. Paul Water Utility open space in Vadnais Heights. The park currently consists of three segments within Shoreview: Grass Lake (271 acres), Snail Lake Corridor (142 acres) and Snail Lake (30 acres). The three segments of the park are connected by 4.1 miles of trails. The Snail Lake Segment is developed with a picnicking, swimming and boating area, play area and volleyball court. These facilities were expanded and renovated in 1996. The Snail Lake Corridor includes a connecting trail between Highway 96 and Gramsie Road. This trail continues through the otherwise undeveloped Grass Lake Segment to I-694.

The estimated number of visitors in 2007 for this regional park was 448,500 people.

### **Regional Trails**

Regional trail corridors are intended to provide for recreational travel along linear pathways throughout the metropolitan area. They are selected to follow natural or linear features that have scenic appeal, historical or architectural and development interest while assuring that the trail treadway will have no adverse affect on natural resources. They also pass through or provide access to the regional park system. Two regional trail systems are located within the City

### **Rice Creek North Regional Trail.**

This trail is located in the northwestern corner of Ramsey County and extends through the Cities of Shoreview, Arden Hills, Mounds View and New Brighton. The trail has a length of 6.2 miles and is part of a 14-mile regional trail corridor that extends from the Chain of Lakes Regional Park Reserve through Long Lake Regional Park then west to the Mississippi River. The corridor segment within Shoreview includes Rice Creek, its floodplain, and additional acreage including 200 acres of former agricultural upland area with scattered wetlands and wooded areas. Rice Creek does have sufficient depth and can accommodate canoeing, however, impediments such as road crossings exist.

Local trails along County Road I, Lexington Avenue and County Road J do provide connections to this trail system. A trailhead parking lot is constructed on County Road I. In addition, there is a 10-acre off-leash dog exercise area south and west of Lexington Avenue with a temporary parking lot. Proposed development improvements for this trail corridor include a canoe launch, parking area and restroom facilities off of Lexington Avenue.

In 2007, it is estimated that 140,400 people visited this section of the trail corridor.

### **Highway 96 Regional Trail.**

The 8.5 mile long Highway 96 Regional Trail is located within the Highway 96 right-of-way, extending from Old Highway 8 in New Brighton to Highway 61 in White Bear Lake. The trail serves as an east-west arterial trail connection connecting northern Ramsey County communities

and regional parks including Long Lake Regional Park, the Vadnais-Snail Lakes Regional Park, Birch Lake Regional Trail and Bruce Vento Regional Trail. This regional trail incorporates the 47 acre Snail Lake Marsh area and includes 1000 feet of shoreline on the northwest shore of Snail Lake. In 2007, trail use was estimated as 208,300 visits.

A portion of this trail segment remains to be completed near Highway 10 and over the Interstate bridges in White Bear Lake, Arden Hills and New Brighton. The Shoreview segment is complete, however improvements are planned for the Snail Lake Marsh area. Ramsey County will be preparing a Master Plan amendment to the Highway 96 Regional Trail Master Plan to incorporate this area. Improvements are likely to include an overlook/rest stop area with a self-guided nature interpretation trail. Much of the Snail Lake Marsh area will be managed to maintain its natural character.

### **Lexington Parkway Regional Trail.**

The Lexington Parkway Regional Trail extends north from the City of St. Paul north to Anoka County. In Shoreview, this trail consists of an existing County trail along Lexington Avenue extending from County Road D to County Road J. The Metropolitan Council's Regional Park System Plan does show a portion of this trail alignment extending into open space between County Road I and County Road J. A connection between these two roadways already exists with the improved trail along Lexington Avenue between County Road I and County Road J. There is some concern that the proposed alignment is not feasible since access is currently provided between the two roadways and due to environmental constraints. Ramsey County and the City of St. Paul will be preparing a joint Master Plan for this regional trail.

### **County Parks**

The Ramsey County *System Plan* defines county parks as “areas of limited size and resource base (generally associated with a significant water recreation resource) that offer a range of related outdoor recreational opportunities for county and metropolitan area residents.” The following county parks are located in Shoreview:

#### **Island Lake County Park.**

This park consists of three distinct segments: a 22-acre picnic area on the east side of the lake, a 41-acre golf teaching center on the northwest side of the lake, and a 30-acre natural area on the southwest side of the lake.

The boat launch area and adjoining parking lot will be redeveloped when the Victoria Street/Interstate 694 interchange is reconstructed. Several design alternatives are being considered and it is the County's intent to maintain a paved pedestrian/bicycle trail parallel to Interstate 694 for a connection between the east and west portions of the park. A boardwalk trail is also proposed along the south shore of Island Lake to create a loop trail around the lake.



### **Lake Owasso County Park.**

This 9-acre park, bisected by North Owasso Boulevard, includes shoreline on both Lake Owasso and Lake Wabasso. The Lake Owasso shoreline is developed with a swimming beach; both lakes offer boat and fishing access.

The park is scheduled for redevelopment of the boat launches, beach area and picnic area. Management of stormwater associated with the parking lots and roadways will be addressed in the redevelopment plan.

### **Poplar Lake County Park.**

This 430-acre park is located in the northeast corner of Shoreview and in White Bear Township to the east. The section in Shoreview consists largely of wetlands, including the 40-acre Poplar Lake, which is classified as a deep marsh. East of Sherwood Road, in White Bear Township, the County maintains a yard waste-composting site that is considered an interim use until the park is developed.

Future plans for the western portion of the park in Shoreview consists of hiking trails with wildlife observation areas. These trails will be designed to compliment the Park's natural environment. Plans have not been developed for the eastern portion of the park.

### **Turtle Lake County Park.**

This 11-acre park is located between Turtle Lake and Highway 49. Its facilities consist of a swimming beach, picnic area with play equipment and a boat access. A small 1-acre area east of the boat access is maintained in natural condition.

The park has insufficient parking for heavy-use periods and no room to expand the parking area. Chippewa Middle School, across Highway 49, provides overflow parking. The County should also evaluate the number of picnic shelters based on use patterns, alternative group sites within the service area and parking lot capacity.

### **Protection Open Space**

Protection Open Space areas are defined as “outstanding landscape amenities, critical natural systems and vulnerable natural resources that contribute to public health, outdoor education, aesthetic enjoyment and ecosystem stability.” The following protection open space is located in Shoreview:

#### **Turtle Creek - County Ditch 8.**

The open space site, 187 acres in size, is located between County Roads I and J, just east of McCullough Park. It includes a mile-long segment of a natural drainage corridor between Rice

Creek (to the north in Anoka County) and Turtle Lake. The remainder of the site consists of marsh, with the exception of a 20-acre wooded “island.”

No development is currently planned for the site, although trails could potentially be extended from McCullough Park into an island area that is currently inaccessible. The southern tip of the island extends onto private residential property. The County has requested the City secure a portion of this land to preserve the integrity of the island at the time this residential property is redeveloped.

## **Special-Use Facilities**

Special use facilities are areas or facilities that provide intense specialize or single-purpose indoor and/or outdoor recreation activities and require a specific resource base, location, restrictive control and management program above and beyond that associated with other general recreational activities. Two special use facilities are located within the City.

### **Ramsey County Ice Arena**

Ramsey County operates the Shoreview Ice Arena, located in the Shoreview Commons area, one of nine public ice arenas throughout the county. This arena serves as the home ice for the Mounds View High School Boys Hockey team and there has been an on-going discussion over the years about improving this facility.

The City also participated in the construction of the SuperRink ice-skating facility, a cooperative venture of several cities and recreation associations, located at the National Sports Center site in the City of Blaine. This complex provides four Olympic-size ice sheets. The City uses one of the sheets in cooperation with the Ramsey County and the Cities of Arden Hills, Mounds View and New Brighton.

### **Island Lake Golf and Training Center**

This center is located in the west portion of Island Lake County Park, south of Interstate 694 and east of Lexington Avenue. The site consists of rolling topography with small ponds and moderate tree cover. The Training Center includes a 1,423-yard, 9-hole par 28 golf course with a driving range, putting course, clubhouse, maintenance shop and parking area. The County has executed a long-term lease/management agreement with a private operator to operate the Center. Currently, there are no plans for future improvements.

## **School Facilities**

City residents are served by two public school districts. The first, Independent School District No. 623, Roseville Area Schools, serves that portion of the community south of Arbogast Street/North Owasso Boulevard. The remainder of the City is served by Independent School District 621, Mounds View Public Schools.

The school facilities within these districts provide recreation play equipment and athletic facilities that not only serve the school population but the larger community. The school districts provide athletic facilities for public recreation in a cooperative manner with local governments and youth athletic associations. The City has contributed financially to upgrades to the gym facilities at both Turtle Lake and Island Lake Elementary Schools. The City has the right to use these gyms after school hours and time is shared between the City's recreational programs and the youth athletic associations. City residents generally have access to school facilities after school hours. School facilities are also used for Community Education programs.

All of the public schools within the City of Shoreview are elementary schools. In addition, there are two schools adjacent to the City's boundaries. The recreational facilities provided at the elementary school level are generally suited for the elementary age population. Pinewood Elementary School (ISD 621) is immediately west of Interstate 35W on County Road I in the City of Mounds View. Chippewa Middle School (ISD 621) lies immediately east of Hodgson Road in the City of North Oaks.

### **Private Recreation Facilities**

In addition to the public parks, open space and school facilities, there are some private recreation facilities located within the City. Private recreational facilities offer recreational opportunities to members of the organization and, in some cases, to the general public.

The Northwest YMCA, located on Lexington Avenue, provides a variety of recreation facilities to members of the organization and the general public as well, with payment of an admission fee. This facility is approximately 50,000 square feet in size and provides indoor gym rooms, fitness center and an indoor pool. Other recreation facilities are located outside, including a ball field and swimming pool.

St. Odilia School, located on Victoria Street, is a private Catholic elementary school. The recreation facilities provided at the school include play equipment, field areas, including a lighted soccer field, and an indoor gym.

The Union Gospel Mission owns a 17-acre parcel located on the north shore of Snail Lake, which is used as a retreat and camp for participants in their programs. The Union Gospel Mission has stated its intent to remain on the property indefinitely; however, the City recognizes the redevelopment potential for this parcel due to its lake frontage and location. Any redevelopment should adhere to the concepts of the *Core Area Framework Plan*, which recommends establishment of a public trail along the shore of Snail Lake.

### **Recreation Facilities in Neighboring Communities**

On the City's western border is the 2,400-acre Twin City Army Ammunition Plant property (TCAAP). A master plan is being developed for this area but has not yet been adopted by the City of Arden Hills. Approximately 1,500 acres on the east side of the property is leased to the Minnesota National Guard for the Arden Hills Army Training Site. This area is anticipated to

remain open and past discussions have suggested approximately 1,100 acres of land be preserved and managed as a regional park. However, there are not plans at this time for a regional park since the National Guard has a long term land lease on this portion of TCAAP.

In addition, the Rice Creek Corridor located in the northwestern corner of TCAAP has been preserved and is managed as part of the Rice Creek North Regional Trail Corridor. A trail connection was open in 2008 that links to trails north of County Road I in Shoreview.

## **Analysis of Future Needs**

### **Open Space and Park Land Study**

In 1996, the Parks and Recreation Commission completed the *Open Space and Park Land Study* reviewing existing open space and parkland within the City and adjacent communities and recommending potential park land/open space acquisitions and financing options.

The Commission identified several reasons or goals that are to be considered when considering the acquisition of land for park and open space purposes. These include: providing additional athletic fields, acquiring in-holding properties, and acquiring historically or naturally significant property for outdoor education, natural habitat and buffer/protection. A thorough review of vacant lands, underdeveloped properties and in-holdings was conducted to determine which lands had potential value for park and open space purposes. The study recommended actions the City should pursue to improve the local park and open space system

### **Needs Assessment and Improvement Recommendations, Shoreview Parks**

The City of Shoreview completed a needs assessment in 2005 that evaluated existing park facilities and developed recommendations and park plans identifying the improvements needed to meet existing and future needs. The study concluded that Shoreview's park system should be renovated to meet the needs of the baby-boom generation, senior citizens and families with young children. Neighborhood parks should have a mix of passive and active uses and loop trails. Shoreview Commons Park should continue to be used to meet community needs for active recreation, passive and natural use and cultural/community gatherings.

Furthermore, the study determined that the park system is well maintained, in good condition and meets a wide spectrum of recreational needs. Enhancements, however, are needed to the system and include updated park buildings, accessible trails, signature park attractions, entrance and parking area aesthetics and signage, additional indoor facilities, and consolidating ice rink locations. The study also recommended the City review the potential for consolidating buildings and uses when building improvements/replacement improvements are programmed. Also, the City needs to consider emerging recreational/leisure activities in its park planning.

## **Distribution of Existing Facilities**

The City has identified the need for additional park space in certain neighborhoods. This conclusion was reached after a review of the adequacy of active recreation space in the City during 1992. The Parks and Recreation Commission identified certain areas within the City that were not adequately served by existing City Parks, County Parks, or public school play areas.

Goals identified in that review called for the provision of active play space within about one half mile of all city residents where practical. The effort led to the identification of five areas as deficient in active play space. A mini-park, Ponds Park, has since been constructed in one of these areas. The remaining four areas are named in this plan as candidate areas for the possible acquisition of parkland for a neighborhood or mini-park. Acquisition of property may only occur as part of a private decision to develop by the property owners and during the review of development applications. See Map10-1 for candidate area locations.

### **Candidate Areas**

**Area 1.** This area is in the Royal Oaks neighborhood north of Lexington Avenue and south of County Road J, extending between two County Open Space properties on the east and west. The area has substantially developed during the 1980s and is not readily served by McCullough Park or Turtle Lake School. There are a few remaining sites that exist within this area that should be reviewed for the park purposes during development review.

**Area 2.** This area, east of Turtle Lake, is characterized by long deep lots (600 to 1000 feet) with narrow frontages on Hodgson Road and the lake. In response to neighborhood sentiment, the City Council rezoned this area to RE (40), Residential Estate with a minimum lot area of 40,000 square feet. If properties in this area are redeveloped in the future, review for a park site should occur. Turtle Lake County Park and Chippewa Middle School can meet some of the needs of this area if access to these sites is improved with a trail along Highway 49.

**Area 3.** This area on the west shore of Turtle Lake is comparable to Area 2. However, the adjacent TCAAP property may include a proposed regional park along Lexington Avenue.

**Area 4.** This area includes the entire southeast corner of the City, which is served by Lake Owasso County Park. This park lacks playing fields and is not easily accessible. Improved access to the park via trails would help to meet local park needs. Opportunities for an additional park site in this area are limited due to the existing development pattern.

## **Athletic Facilities**

Mounds View School District in cooperation with the Cities of Arden Hills, Mounds View, New Brighton and Shoreview conducted an *Athletic Facilities Needs Analysis* in 1997. Residents in the Mounds View School District had raised concerns that the supply and availability of certain athletic facilities were inadequate. As a result, this study examined school needs and broader community needs to determine the adequacy of facilities and identified what actions were needed

if inadequacies existed.

The study concluded that athletic facilities within the district are generally adequate to meet existing and future demand with a few exceptions. These exceptions included the need for additional gym space, a sports tournament facility, additional soccer fields, and medium-size softball and baseball fields.

A number of facility improvements have been made since 1997 and in 2002 the School District completed the *2002 Update of the Athletic Facilities Needs Analysis*. The study found that there are some needs that remain unfulfilled including the need for a sports complex and varsity baseball field. Recommendations include:

1. Acquiring and developing a sports complex on the former Twin Cities Army Ammunition plant property in Arden Hills.
2. Adding two full sized baseball fields.
3. Add and improve multi-purpose turf fields.
4. Field renovation.
5. Continued coordination of facility development and programming.

## **Active Living**

Parks and open space can be developed and managed in a manner that promotes active living and integrates physical activity into daily routines. Research has found that physical inactivity plays a significant role in common chronic diseases including coronary heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure and diabetes. Furthermore, studies have concluded that physical activity improves the quality of life and health. It reduces the risk for developing some chronic diseases by 50%. Research has also found that the presence of parks, trails and greenways promote physical activity among a diversity of groups.

The park system in Shoreview has been designed to provide residents with opportunities to be physically active through the location of parks in or near residential neighborhoods, providing facilities that meet resident needs and trail improvements that connect residential neighborhoods with parks. This park system is supplemented by recreation programming which uses these park facilities for recreation programs.

## **Goals, Policies, and Recommended Actions**

### **Goals**

1. To provide park facilities and programs which meet the changing recreational needs of the community.
2. To balance the recreational needs of park users, the need for access to natural areas and the protection of sensitive resources.

3. To coordinate with other regional, school district or neighboring communities in developing a recreational system, including programs that meet the community's needs.
4. To improve the health of the community and encourage physical activity by providing a park system that is accessible to all residents and includes facilities for active recreation.

## **Policies**

### **General**

- A. Parkland and facilities shall be maintained in a manner that emphasizes access, user safety and high quality.
- B. Consider park and open space needs with land use and transportation planning.

### **Park Planning**

- A. Recreational facilities will be developed so as to be compatible with surrounding residential neighborhoods and other adjacent land uses.
- B. City parks will be designed and developed to emphasize active recreation, while regional and county open space areas will generally provide opportunities for passive recreation.
- C. A “no-net-loss” policy is hereby adopted in which the City commits to replacing parkland lost to other uses (such as right-of-way acquisition, ponding or non-park related buildings).
- D. The City will review all development proposals for potential impacts on the park system, and determine the need for additional improvements. In addition, the potential impact and connectivity of developments adjacent to parks and open space land will be reviewed.
- E. Continue to maintain the Shoreview Commons Park area and the Community Center as the focal point in the city for social, cultural, and recreational opportunities.

### **Accessibility**

- A. The City will seek to ensure that all public facilities are accessible to all residents of the City.
- B. The City will work to ensure that most residents live within a service radius of approximately one half mile from either a City Park, County Park or public school site within the City or an adjacent community. Obstacles to access such as lakes or a major roadway will effectively reduce the service radius in some instances. Public improvements, such as trails, can increase the effective service radius in other instances.
- C. Identify parks and other recreational facilities through the use of signage that directs users to park facilities and potential destinations.

## **Coordination**

- A. The City will continue to work with Ramsey County to plan and implement improvements to county open space areas in order to meet both City recreational needs and County goals.
- B. The City will continue to coordinate trail development with Ramsey County, Anoka County, adjacent municipalities and other governmental agencies.
- C. The City will continue to coordinate recreation programming and facilities with area school districts.
- D. Participate in local and regional decisions that affect parks and open space within the community.

## **Trails and Bikeways**

- A. The City will develop its trail system to provide recreational opportunities within parks and open space as well as connections among parks, neighborhoods and community facilities.
- B. The City may require trail or bikeway connections be provided within new developments or as part of road reconstruction projects.
- C. Trails and bikeways should provide a means of getting around in natural areas as well as access to natural areas.
- D. The City shall support the goals, policies and recommended actions for the trail system as stated in Chapter 5, Transportation.

## **Actions**

### **Park Maintenance and Improvements**

**Capital Improvement Program (CIP).** The City will continue to reinvest in its park facilities through the CIP. The CIP is a planning document that makes a general policy statement through the allocation of financial resources to various community needs and projects. This document establishes the City Council's prioritization of the limited resources available for capital project spending. It identifies what projects should be included, when they should be constructed and how they will be financed over a five-year period.

The 2008 - 2012 CIP identifies several park improvement projects, including improvements to Wilson, McCullough, Rice Creek Fields, Shamrock and Sitzler Parks and Shoreview Commons. The CIP also includes funding for other improvements identified in the Shoreview parks needs assessment.



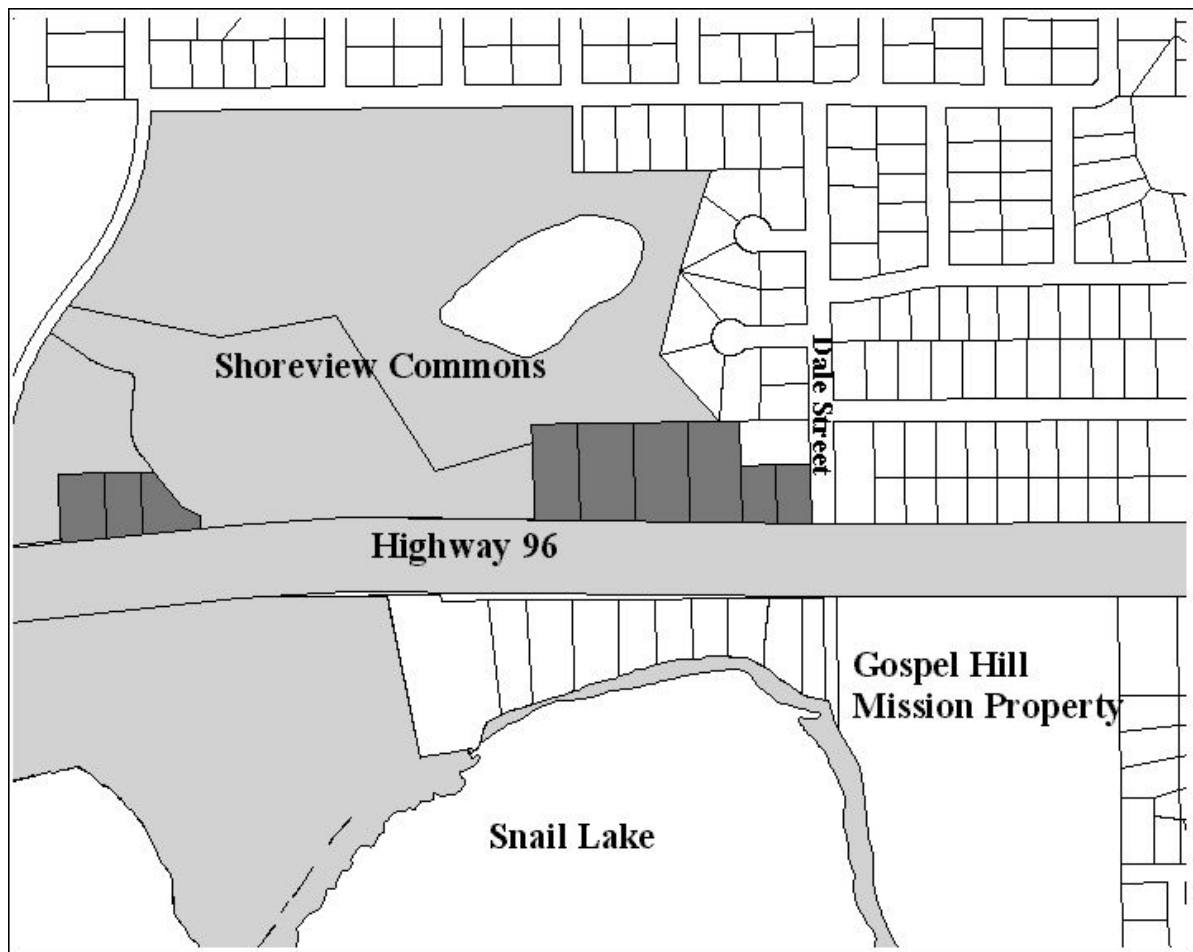
**Comprehensive Infrastructure Replacement Plan.** In addition to the CIP, the City Council has adopted a Comprehensive Infrastructure Replacement Plan (CHIRP). This plan, like the CIP, addresses the future replacement or reinvestment in City facilities. The CHIRP, however, describes the policies and presents information derived through careful analysis of replacement needs over the next fifty years.

### **Park Acquisition and System Expansion**

The City will continue to implement the recommendations of *the Open Space and Park Land Study*. These recommendations include:

- **Shoreview Commons Park In-Holdings.** Homes located near the intersection of Highway 96 and Victoria Street should be considered for acquisition when there is an identified need; most likely in conjunction with the future expansion of the library. Other residential lots along the north side of Highway 96 east of the Community Center should be considered for acquisition when there is an identified need relating to the expansion of the Community Center or Commons Park Enhancements. This recommendation is consistent with the *Core Area Framework Plan*.

#### **Shoreview Commons In-Holdings**



- **Gospel Hill Mission Property.** When an opportunity arises, consider the acquisition of easements along Snail Lake for a public trail with access to the Highway 96 Regional Trail.
- **Bobby Theisen Park In-Holdings.** Three single-family homes on County Road E are surrounded by the park property. Although there is not an immediate need, the City may purchase these properties in the future if recreational needs dictate. This acquisition would enable the City to complete the park boundary and expand the recreational area.

#### **Bobby Theisen Park In-Holdings**



- **United Tower Property.** This property lies adjacent to Grass Lake in the Snail Lake Regional Park. At least a portion of this property should be considered for incorporation into Snail Lake Regional Park in the event that the tower use is ever eliminated.
- **Outdoor Educational Classroom.** The abundance of open space throughout the community provides an opportunity to create an outdoor environmental learning center for youth, which could be used to teach children about nature and environmental issues. The City may work

with both the Mounds View School District and Roseville School District and Ramsey County to further explore this idea.

### **Commons Master Plan**

- Explore the construction of an outdoor water play area. The master plan includes the development of an outdoor water play area to replace the current outdated and underutilized wading pool. In the late 1990's, the City designed and bid a custom water play area, however, the bids were rejected because they exceeded the budget estimates. An outdoor water play area would be a significant enhancement and revenue producer.
- Program other key elements of the Master Plan in the City's Capital Improvement Program.

### **Candidate Areas for New Parks**

For those areas identified as Candidate Areas, the City may pursue acquisition for the development of neighborhood parks or mini-parks in these neighborhoods. Acquisition of property may only occur as part of a private decision to develop by the property owners and during the review of development applications.

### **Athletic Facilities**

The City will continue to work with other communities and school district to implement the recommendations of the Athletic Facility Needs Analysis. These recommendations included:

- Closely monitor and evaluate potential for a tournament sports complex on the TCAAP property.
- Evaluate cooperative use agreements with the School Districts for enhanced use and improvements of outdoor youth baseball and soccer fields.

### **Cooperative Parks Planning Efforts**

The City will continue to participate with Ramsey County and the school districts in multi-jurisdictional park planning efforts when opportunities become available to meet the recreational needs of the community.

### **Parks Programming**

The City's parks and recreation program will continue to respond to the changing demographics and needs of the community. The City will continue to evaluate its park facilities and programs in light of the community's recreational needs.